

DIVISION: FORMS 1 - IV
AGE GROUP: 12 years Plus
SERIES: CURRENT AFFAIRS
PROGRAMME (1) "Elections"
RECORDED ON: 26th September, 1964
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NARR: Hello boys and girls,

I'm sure that recently you've been hearing the word "Elections" ^{over and over again}. If you listen to the radio - especially at news time you'll hear it. And if you looked at the newspapers almost on any day now you see the word - Obviously it's a very important word in Guyana at this time. But you ^{know}, boys and girls, ^{at this time} it's not an important word in Guyana only, it's very important in England and in the United States. For both these countries are going to have elections very soon. And there is just as much excitement and talk about elections ~~as~~ there ~~is~~ here. Well let's try and see if we can find out why people get all excited about elections, or to put it another way, what are elections.

Let's begin with something that we all know about. Suppose ten or twelve of you wanted to form a club - a cricket club or a football club, or any sort of club. After you've got together and decided that you will have the club, then the next thing is to have a leader; and a couple of assistants. How are you going to choose the leader? You can, if you like, go to someone older than yourselves and say "Tell me whom we should have as our leader". But boys and girls won't do that. They already have in their minds whom they want as leader. But it's seldom the same person.

/Some of the.....

Some of the boys will want John; some will want Dennis and so on. How do you decide who will be the leader? Quite simple. You have an election. You call a meeting and at your meeting some one acts as a chairman. He says "all those in favour of John show your hands", and let's say six hands go up. Then he says "All those in favour of Dennis, show your hands", and this time seven hands go up. Obviously Dennis becomes the leader of your club. You may call him "President or Chairman", or your leader. But the thing is you have elected Dennis by your votes.

All right, let's now go a bit further and see how countries do this. Most countries in the world today elect their governments. This is because most countries practise what is called Democracy - that really means, Government by the people. But you can see easily that all the people cannot do the governing. So they elect a small number of men and women to govern in their name - to "represent" them as we say. Then these people when they are elected usually meet in an Assembly or a Parliament and there they discuss what laws they want to introduce or to change, what money the country needs and how to raise that money and so on. But these people are elected to do this usually for a certain number of years - in most countries it's five - in some it's four, in others it's as long as seven. But when the time is up then you have to have Elections....so you can have a new Assembly or a new Parliament. The idea behind elections then is really to see whether the people of the country want the same lot of

/representatives to govern.....

representatives to govern them or whether they want a different lot. You see, elections give the people a chance to tell their representatives whether they did a good job or not.

OPR:

-----MUSIC BREAK-----

NARR:

You can see now why there is so much excitement at election~~x~~ time everywhere. People get excited because this is the most important way they have of helping to govern their country. But there's another reason too. People often differ among themselves over how they want a country to be governed. And so they organise themselves into different political parties. For instance, let's say that there are some people who believe that their country will become rich quickly if the Government owned most of the factories and businesses. And others think that the country will become rich quickly if you left the factories and businesses to be run by private people. Well you'll soon find that you have a political party to represent the first idea and another to represent the second idea. And at election time - or during the weeks just before elections - each political party will do its best to win the greater number of people over to its side. This is what is called campaigning. ~~x~~ [Night after night you will see crowds of people assembling at street corners, or in open spaces in the villages to listen to a member of a political party. He'll try to persuade them to vote for his party. And not far away you often find another meeting going on. An important member of another party will be doing exactly the same thing - trying to persuade his listeners that his party has the best plans and trying

/to show that the.....

to show that the plans of the other party are not good. The crowds listen to the various speeches - and sometimes they seem to like what one speaker says and to dislike what another says; sometimes they tease the speakers in middle of their speeches. This is called heckling. Sometimes one or two of the people listening ask difficult questions to see if they can confuse the speaker. But ~~it~~ it's not always easy to tell which way the people will vote - and it is all this that makes election time so exciting. Everything seems so uncertain. Until all the votes are counted everyone waits excited and wondering how his party will come out.

You noticed I said that everything is uncertain until the votes are counted. You know why, don't you. Yes. because people vote in secret. We call it the secret ballot.

You remember we said at the beginning that the last three months of this year will be election time in three important countries. One is the United States, another is England and the third is of course our own Guyana. In America they're going to vote to see who will be the new President - whether it will be President Johnson who became President when President Kennedy died last year or Senator Goldwater. In England too there will be elections in October to see which of the Parties - the Conservative Party or the Labour Party or the Liberal Party will be the Government.

Here in British Guiana the Governor announced last Friday that our Election date is the 7th of December. Now that the date has been announced, I'm sure you too will catch some

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of the excitement of election time. You'll hear, speeches in Georgetown and in the country. You'll hear lots of arguments about one political party or another, because elections are very important to everybody.

One day when you're 21 years old you too will have to vote. Then you'll have to think carefully. For as we said, you'll then be choosing the people you want to govern you. And this, boys and girls, is one of the most important and exciting things anyone can do. For by it you can make the future of Guyana brighter.

OPR: PLAY THEME: